

~~SECRET~~

NEAR EAST/AFRICA DIVISION
OFFICE OF REPORTS AND ESTIMATES
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

WORKING PAPER

MAR 22 1950

NOTICE: This document is a working paper, not an official CIA issuance. It has been co-ordinated within ORE, but not with the IAC Agencies. It represents current thinking by specialists in CIA, and is designed for use by others engaged in similar or overlapping studies. The opinions expressed herein may be revised before final and official publication. It is intended solely for the information of the addressee and not for further dissemination.

Copy for:

DOCUMENT NO. 11
NO CHANGE IN CLASS. ☐
☒ DECLASSIFIED
CLASS. CHANGED TO TS S C
NEXT REVIEW DATE: _____
AUTH: HR 70-2
DATE: 19 Nov 79 REVIEWER: 006514

NEAR EAST/AFRICA DIVISION

Vol. V No. 11

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

For Week Ending
22 March 1950

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Turkey

Inönü plays it safe 1
President acts to insure his own re-election to office

Flood damage 1
Government party one of the sufferers

Egypt

Fence-mending in the Sudan 2
Egypt soft-pedaling annexation theme

Syria-Lebanon

Economic rift 2
Mutual dependence will probably force some sort of
rapprochement

Iran

Downfall of Saed 3
Premier was weak, but will Shah find more effective
successor?

Noted in Brief

25X6A

Eritrea, Iran, Pakistan, Afghanistan, India 3

NEAR EAST/AFRICA INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

TURKEY

" " Inonu plays it safe: President Inonu, who must retain a seat in the National Assembly to be eligible for continuation in his present high office, is apparently taking care to avoid a repetition of his experience in the last election, four years ago, when there were indications that he actually lost his seat and had to have the vote count hastily adjusted to take care of the situation. In the forthcoming elections, as heretofore, Inönü will run in the province of Ankara. This year, however, it appears that he plans to tour the province before the elections to show himself to the provincial country-folk outside the city of Ankara who rarely, if ever, have seen him. Furthermore, he may accept offers from the provinces of Konya or Malatya to stand as a deputy for one of them, such dual candidacy being permissible according to the law. Since his family has long been associated with Malatya, perhaps the latter will be the favored choice for Inönü's electoral insurance policy.

Flood damage: The severe floods at Eskisehir in northwestern Turkey, the worst in years, have left many thousands of people homeless and perhaps as many who are exceedingly bitter over the government's alleged failure to take any adequate preventive action. According to a press report, the president of Turkey, during a visit to the area, was actually greeted with angry shouts to the effect that governmental inactivity and maladministration was responsible for the floods. These accusations already have a partisan cast despite presidential appeals that politics be kept out of what amounts to a national calamity, and politics will probably continue to creep back into the discussion. The ruling People's Republican Party, which had seemed to have gained popular support during recent months, may find that the Democratic opposition is perfectly capable of taking advantage of the flood situation to win voters away from the government. To the probable governmental disclaimer of responsibility, which will doubtless be accompanied by perfectly true assertions that plans for the control and utilization of the waterways concerned have already been prepared by US specialists, the opposition may repeat the angry words reportedly addressed by a Democratic deputy to Inönü himself at Eskisehir: "The plans were made long ago, only there isn't anybody to carry them out."

~~SECRET~~

REF ID:

Fence-mending in the Sudan: In anticipation of renewed discussions with the UK over the status of the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, Egypt's Wafd Government has been subtly attempting to strengthen its standing with politically conscious Sudanese. In the past, Egypt clamored for incorporation of the Sudan into its own territory and supported the pro-union groups in the Sudan as against the Independent Front, which has favored the British (and participated in the British-sponsored Sudan Legislative Assembly) despite its basic demand that the Sudan be freed from British as well as Egyptian rule. Recently, however, Egypt has shifted the emphasis from unification to the idea of a loose federation between the two countries, in response to indications that the two leading politico-religious blocs in the Sudan are slowly moving toward a compromise demand for immediate replacement of the present regime by a Sudanese Republic, whose future relationship with Egypt would be determined by plebiscite. This modification of Egypt's attitude evidently represents an attempt to dissipate Sudanese fears of Egyptian domination and establish Egypt as the friend of a united Sudanese political movement. Should the Wafd Government thus succeed in luring the pro-independence parties away from the UK, the British would have the unpleasant choice either of justifying the present British policy of gradually providing self-government for the Sudanese, or of going the Egyptians one better.

SYRIA-LEBANON

Economic rift: The Syrian Government's recently announced "temporary transitional measures" regarding economic relations with Lebanon in effect suspend the customs union between the two countries. Current rumors that this action presages a final definite economic break do not, however, appear justified. In the course of Syro-Lebanese relations, various temporary irritations have frequently led to threats by one side or the other of a break in their economic ties. While the present case--which apparently arose more out of political friction than out of such economic differences as the premium enjoyed by the Lebanese pound--appears to be more serious than similar developments in the past, the fact remains that the two countries are economically interdependent. Syrian trade must still move, for the most part, through the port of Beirut; Lebanon continues obliged to rely upon Syrian agriculture (particularly grain) for its needs. Thus, although

these two countries are once more trading insults across the border like spoiled children, it appears probable that self-interest will again oblige them in the end to reestablish some workable modus vivendi.

IRAN

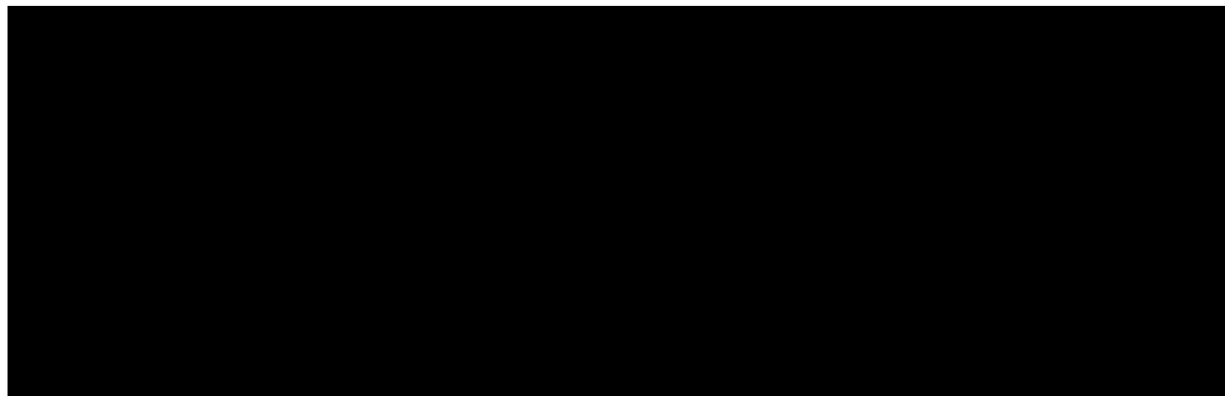
Downfall of Saed: The recently submitted resignation of Prime Minister Saed frees Iran of a government which, though it managed to remain in office for all of 17 months, has in recent months shown increasing inability to cope with Iran's problems. Saed, who has repeatedly expressed a desire to relinquish the premiership, has been a notable failure with regard to halting Iran's deepening economic depression, and his resignation at this time was reportedly due to the Shah's ire over the government's continued floundering during his recent absence in Pakistan. In addition, Saed has been unsuccessful in obtaining a vote of confidence from the new Majlis.

While the passing of a weak government at a time when Iran is facing a critical situation is not to be bemoaned, the Shah, in removing Saed, has brought down upon himself the problem of finding someone who is an improvement. None of the men mentioned as possible successors to Saed gives real promise of being able to carry out the drastic program which the present situation demands. Unless the Shah succeeds in meeting the growing popular demand for a strong and competent premier, however, the tendency toward frustration and despair in Iran will spread, with the result that the government will become increasingly vulnerable to the subversive efforts of the pro-Soviet Tudeh Party and to other dissidents.

25X6A

NOTED IN BRIEF

25X6A



* * *

Chief of Staff General Razmara attaches no special significance to the extensive Soviet maneuvers presently being held in the area north of the frontier between the Moghan Steppes and Astara. As a precautionary measure, however, he has ordered that an Iranian battalion near Astara, which was due to be relieved remain in the area together with the newly arrived relieving battalion.

* * *

It is unlikely that the Tudeh Party's clandestine operational center has been transferred from Azerbaijan to Khorasan in northeastern Iran, as reported by the Iranian Director General of Propaganda. While very little is known about the present Tudeh underground organization and nothing about its active leaders, it is probable that Tudeh has established regional centers in both Khorasan and Azerbaijan and that its chief operations center is in Tehran.

* * *

For the second year, Pakistan is to spend more than half its current revenue budget on defense. India also will spend approximately half its current budget on defense, in spite of previous intimations it would cut military spending. These large expenditures indicate once more that the economic development of both countries is being subordinated in favor of defense, due to continuing tension between them.

* * *

The Prime Minister of Pakistan and the Governor of the North West Frontier Province have expressed the belief that Afghanistan's agitation in the tribal areas has Indian financial support. In support of this contention, they point out that textiles and bread flour are being sold on the Afghan side of the Durand line at fully 25 percent below prevailing Kabul prices.

* * *

~~SECRET~~

5.

The current visit of the Prime Minister of Pakistan to Dacca, at a time when the Constituent Assembly is in session, indicates deep concern over the Bengal situation and may result in a joint declaration with Indian Prime Minister Nehru on the subject. In addition to the international aspects of the unrest, the possible loss of Hindu clerks in the banks is viewed with alarm.

*

*

*

An editorial of 27 January in the Cominform journal For A Lasting Peace: For A People's Democracy, published in Bucharest, apparently sets the stage for a change of tactics by Indian Communists. This editorial advocates abandonment of the unsuccessful "militant" tactics used by the CPI since February 1948 and urges the adoption of more peaceful methods of achieving Communist aims. Indian Communists have indicated that they intend to follow the new line. If they do so, the Government of India will find it difficult to suppress the CPI and its publications, and the Communist movement in India may rapidly gain in strength.